

Braille Monitor



FEBRUARY, 1978

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

PUBLICATION OF THE
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

FEBRUARY 1978

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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DONALD McCONNELL, *Editor*

* * *

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* * *

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* * *

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND IS NOT AN ORGANIZATION
SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND—IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES.

SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION SEEKS NEW COMMISSIONER

"Commission for Blind Seeks New Commissioner." This was the title of the lead article in the November 1977 issue of the *Palmetto Blind*, the magazine of the NFB of South Carolina. It was an announcement which marked a major achievement for the blind of that state. As the article stated:

"Pursuant to action taken by the Board of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind on Wednesday, October 10, Henry F. Watts ceased being the Commissioner of the agency. *The State*, South Carolina's largest newspaper, prominently featured Watts' termination in a front-page article. Thus, after serving as the administrative head of the Commission for the Blind for nearly four and a half years, the Watts era is now history. Slightly more than 3 years ago, in September 1974, the executive committee and board of directors of the NFB of South Carolina (operating then as the South Carolina Aurora Club of the Blind) petitioned the board of the Commission for the Blind for Watts' resignation. The petition or resolution read, in part, as follows:

"Whereas the South Carolina Commission for the Blind was created in 1966 as a result of legislation sponsored by the South Carolina Aurora Club of the Blind as the state agency to promote quality programs and services for the blind of this state, and it therefore follows that the South Carolina Aurora Club is vitally concerned with the progress and well-being of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind; and

"Whereas the South Carolina Aurora Club believes that there has been a deterioration in the quality of programs and services for the blind as well as other serious difficulties which adversely affect the over-all progress for the blind as a result of poor leadership by the executive director of the Commission, as evidenced by:

"(1) The closing of the training and adjustment center because of internal strife between blind clients and Commission staff in March of 1974, which is believed to be

unprecedented in programs administered by state agencies for the blind.

"(2) Mr. Watts' inability to effectively utilize over \$500,000 in state and federal funds appropriated specifically for the use and benefit of the blind during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1974, even though hundreds of blind South Carolinians desperately need training and vocational rehabilitation.

"(3) Mr. Watts' employment of personnel by reason of political pressure rather than merit and suitability.

"(4) The substantial percentage of blind clients whose cases are closed without their being placed at a place of employment with wages, or without any employment at all, as well as a substantial percentage of blind clients being placed in submarginal employment well below the minimum wage.

"(5) Mr. Watts' demonstrated lack of understanding of and proper respect for blind persons, having compared blind clients to hospital patients and having referred to the socio-economic conditions of the blind in a derogatory manner when interviewed by the news media at the time the training center was closed—all to the detriment of the blind whose progress and well-being depend upon an improved image and better public attitudes, rather than being demeaned by a director of a state agency for the blind.

"(6) Mr. Watts' failure to effect construction of an adjustment and training center even though \$2,500,000 of state funds were appropriated for this purpose well over one year ago, causing blind clients to be sent out of state for training.

"(7) Continuing strife and dissension among various staff members with grievance hearings, etc.

"(8) Mr. Watts' failure to keep commitments and agreements, resulting in a serious credibility problem.

"(9) His refusal to discuss directly with blind clients matters brought to his personal

attention.

“(10) Complaints by clients about the caliber of services being rendered at the training center as well as lack of proper client service in several areas of the state, including complaints by blind college students.

“(11) Mr. Watts’ failure to promote a better climate and atmosphere with all parties interested in work with the blind.

“(12) Mr. Watts’ improper intervention in private organizations of the blind, advocating membership in one without discussing the merits of others, which he knows has the effect of dividing the blind of the state.

“(13) Mr. Watts’ failure to acknowledge and respond to a telegram signed by a number of blind persons requesting a courtesy meeting, and his insulting behavior when approached about this conduct.”

The resolution concluded by calling for the employment of a new Commission director who “has a proper and wholesome understanding and philosophy toward blindness, who can effectively utilize appropriated funds for rehabilitation of the blind, who has the ability to withstand political pressure as it relates to the employment of employees and subordinates, who will keep commitments and will promote a climate of harmony and will exercise good judgment regarding the affairs of the blind.”

This resolution was sent to the board of the Commission over three years ago, and in the time since then, the situation has deteriorated further. The low point may have been reached last June 12, when blind South Carolinians received their Sunday papers. There on the front page of the *State* was an article titled “Serving the Blind: A Dose of Controversy.” One paragraph of the story read as follows:

“Watts’ only other comment was: ‘I don’t believe I ever called Don Capps a paranoid bastard. I called him a paranoid son of a bitch.’”

Don Capps, as First Vice-President of the Federation and long-time leader of the blind of South Carolina, has come in for his share of abuse over the years; but he felt—and

the blind of the state agreed—that this went too far. He instituted a libel suit against Henry Watts. The complaint filed in August pointed out that the remarks quoted in the article were not an isolated instance. As the complaint stated:

“On multiple occasions subsequent to his having become Executive Director or Commissioner of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind, [Henry Watts] has personally engaged in the utterance of derogatory and defamatory remarks about the plaintiff to individuals, to gatherings of individuals, to members of the Commission for the Blind of South Carolina, and to both blind and sighted citizens of the State of South Carolina involved and interested in the affairs and work of improving the status of life for blind citizens”

“As a direct and proximate result of the utterance and publication of the aforesaid untrue and defamatory libel against the person of the plaintiff, plaintiff has suffered substantial personal, business, and professional embarrassment and loss of reputation. Further, he has been called upon constantly to explain or comment upon the statement and the background of the difficulties between the defendant and the plaintiff by reason of inquiry made of him from individuals who have read the newspaper article bearing the aforesaid statement.”

After the article was published, Mr. Watts claimed his remark was “off-the-cuff” and not intended for publication—a weak sort of response since he made the remark in an interview with a newspaper reporter.

Finally, in October, the Commission board took action. As reported in the October 20 issue of the *State*: “The governing board of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind secretly voted Wednesday to seek the resignation of Henry F. Watts, who has been Commissioner of the agency for the past four years. The resignation is expected today. The board voted unanimously in a three-hour session, closed to the public and press, to ask for the resignation and to fire Watts if he doesn’t resign.”

The meaning of this step and the prospects for the future were the subject of an editorial by Don Capps in the *Palmetto Blind*. He wrote as follows:

"During the past 11 years the Commission for the Blind has dismissed two executive directors. There has also been considerable turnover on the Commission board. Several board members have resigned in the past, and there have been no fewer than four different board chairmen. The Federation is convinced that the search committee recognizes the qualities a person must have in order to effectively lead the Commission.

"In addition to having the ability to carry out his administrative functions, the new Commissioner must believe in and like blind people and have the personality and good judgment to get along with the blind, including all groups in work with the blind. We also firmly believe that the new Commissioner must have a successful background in work with the blind and his integrity must be unquestioned. The Federation and other groups will, of course, want to have input concerning the selection of the new Commissioner, especially since the Federation was very much involved in this entire matter and wished to make every possible contribution to a future of greater progress and harmony.

"And finally, it is essential to comment upon the role we each play in this humanitarian work. Contrary to what Mr. Watts and some others preached when he was

Commissioner, the Federation does not wish to dominate anyone in work with the blind. The Federation does seek and insist upon a meaningful partnership with those in 'blind work,' but partnership is entirely different from domination. It should be understood by all concerned that the NFB of South Carolina is in its fourth decade of service to the blind and has grown rapidly over the years to where it now stands as the largest state organization of the blind in the Southeast and one of the largest in the nation. Its leaders are responsible and progressive. The Federation will continue to develop its own programs, but will also welcome an opportunity to work with all others in work for the blind who will let it do so in what we have already referred to as on a basis of meaningful partnership.

"The Federation understands its role, and we believe it is important for everyone in work with the blind to understand each other's role. This leads to better cooperation and greater success. All of us should strive for excellence and never again permit anyone to remain in work with the blind who demonstrates the terrible judgment of categorizing the blind with the mentally ill or referring to blind persons as being paranoid. Public attitudes toward blindness have improved in recent years, but a great deal of improvement is still needed. Let us all make every effort to profit by the mistakes which have been made and dedicate ourselves to improving the lot of all of the blind in this state and nation." □

VICTORY IN THE ZORICK CASE

A story about Michael Zorick in the Jacksonville, Florida, *Times-Union* last August had this to say about him: "The 30-year-old Californian . . . is a nationally known athlete in a sport [wrestling] where men of his age are virtually never still active. And he has a dream of competing in the 1980 Olympics despite the fact that he has been blind since birth."

"In his last national contest, [says Zorick,]

'I ended up the second-best wrestler in my class in the nation. The class is up to 114 pounds. And the guy who beat me was not from this country, he was from Mexico. So you could call me the best wrestler from this country in my class.'

These paragraphs tell us the two things about Michael Zorick which became important when he applied for a job teaching physical education in the Clay County

School System in Florida: (1) he is a much better than average athlete; and (2) he is blind. The story is the old familiar one. The school system offered Mr. Zorick a job. Then it found out he was blind. The job offer was withdrawn, despite the fact that Florida has a law requiring that the handicapped be hired in the public schools "unless it is shown that the particular disability prevents the satisfactory performance of the work involved."

Drawing on the traditional stereotype of blindness, the Clay County School System thought it was obvious that Mr. Zorick could not handle his duties as a gym teacher. As the Jacksonville *Times-Union* wrote in another article, after interviewing the school district's attorney: "Attorney Frank Scruby argued the school personnel had reasonable cause to deny employment because a blind person would be unable to satisfactorily perform the job because he could not adequately teach and supervise children on an elementary school playground."

Here the matter stood until the NFB of Florida heard about it. Then with the support—both financial and moral—of the Federation, Michael Zorick took the matter to court. During the trial, the court heard testimony from three persons who successfully taught physical education although they were blind. This again is the old story. No matter what the laws may say, a blind person is presumed incompetent unless he can prove he can do the job. And usually he is not given a chance to prove his ability until he has taken the matter to court.

Judge Susan H. Black of the Clay County circuit court heard the case, and her decision was as follows:

"This cause came on for trial without a jury before the court on plaintiff's complaint, and the court having considered the evidence adduced at trial, the memoranda and arguments of the parties, finds:

"(1) That the plaintiff, Michael P. Zorick, was hired by the Clay County School Board in August 1974 as a physical education teacher at Middleburg Elementary School

for the school year commencing September 1974.

"(2) That the plaintiff was subsequently found to be blind and that based upon his blindness the plaintiff was informed that the job of physical education teacher at Middleburg Elementary School was no longer available.

"(3) That at no time was the plaintiff afforded the opportunity to show that he could satisfactorily perform the work involved as a physical education teacher at Middleburg Elementary School.

"(5) That the federal statutes are not applicable in this case in that section 413.08(3), Florida Statutes, which provides,

It is the policy of this state that the blind, the visually handicapped, the otherwise physically disabled shall be employed in the services of the state, or political subdivisions of the state, in the public schools, and in all other employment supported in all or in part by public funds, and no employer shall refuse employment to the blind, the visually handicapped, or otherwise physically disabled on the basis of the disability alone unless it is shown that the particular disability prevents the satisfactory performance of the work involved.

is applicable. Equity and the law of the State of Florida would demand that the plaintiff be given an opportunity to demonstrate whether or not he can satisfactorily perform the work of physical education teacher at the Middleburg Elementary School. The plaintiff was denied that opportunity."

Even after this decision, the school board was reluctant to give Mr. Zorick a job. They thought of appealing. Then they decided to offer him a job on a monthly basis. In other words, they wanted to let him into the school just long enough to prove that he couldn't do the job. The Clay County School System doesn't believe that equal opportunity and presumption of capability have anything to do with them. Fortunately, the courts do not agree. This case was won because the Federation was there

to provide the impetus for Michael Zorick to sue for his rights; it was there to provide witnesses to the fact that blind people already have succeeded as physical education teachers; and it was there to pay the bill.

Forty years ago, before the Federation, this situation would have gone unchallenged; and if it had been challenged, it would have made no difference. First we had to realize that with training and self-confidence, we could compete in regular jobs; then we fought to get the chance to try; then we worked to pass legislation guaranteeing our right to try. The environment for our efforts has gradually changed: Now we have laws

to back us up and we have blind people with the experience to prove the correctness of these laws guaranteeing equal opportunity. We also now have available the experience of blind people who have faced discrimination; and their willingness to work to help others face new cases of it has made the prospects of blind people such as Michael Zorick brighter than ever before in history.

Blind teachers of sighted children are a commonplace in California and many other parts of the nation. One day they will be a common sight in every state. And once more we find the answer to the question, Why a National Federation of the Blind? □

BALTIMORE CONVENTION BULLETIN

by BETH SCHUSTER

Are you ready for the NFB's 1978 Convention in Baltimore? If not, maybe you don't know when it is. It will be from Sunday July 2 through Friday July 7. Or maybe you haven't made your reservations. There are three hotels to choose from: the Lord Baltimore with \$10 singles and \$14 doubles; the Hilton with \$12 singles and \$16 doubles; and the Holiday Inn with \$10 singles, \$12 doubles, \$14 triples, and \$18 for four in a room. Or maybe you do not know how much the deposit is or where to send it. Send a \$10 check made out to Baltimore Convention to this address: Baltimore Convention, Box 4422, Baltimore, Maryland 21223.

You can specify which hotel you want to be in, but we can't make any guarantees. As the time draws closer, the hotels will fill up and you will have to be assigned to wherever there is space. So the sooner you send in your check and reservations, the better chance you have of getting the hotel of your choice. All three hotels are first-rate, and the farthest is only one block from the Convention Center where we will be meeting. Two of the hotels are joined to the Center by walkways over the streets. We will be in the new convention complex,

with shops, theaters, and plenty of parking.

Baltimore is on Chesapeake Bay, and the Convention Center is a two-minute walk from the newly renovated Inner Harbor. The city arranges summer events at the harbor—from fairs to ethnic festivals. At the harbor is the *Constellation*, America's oldest naval vessel, which is open for tours. There are two boats which cruise the harbor, and since Baltimore is the country's crab capital and July is well into crab season, there are fine seafood restaurants in abundance.

Baltimore is one of our oldest cities, and there are restored historic streets and buildings to tour. Or you can visit Fort McHenry National Monument, where Francis Scott Key, after a 25-hour bombardment during the War of 1812, saw the flag still waving and was inspired to write the "Star-Spangled Banner." You will also be just 40 miles from Washington, D.C., which has more tourist attractions than you can shake a stick at, including the flag which flew over Fort McHenry. But send your reservations in soon or you may end up staying closer to the flag than the fort.

Looking ahead to 1979, arrangements have been made to hold the NFB Convention in sunny Miami Beach. □

IMPROVEMENTS IN DISABILITY INSURANCE FOR THE BLIND: SUCCESS IN THE 95th CONGRESS

by JAMES GASHEL

On December 15, 1977, the first session of the 95th Congress adjourned immediately after both the Senate and the House of Representatives approved the Social Security Amendments of 1977. This bill (signed by the President on December 20 and known as Public Law 95-216) seeks to remedy the shortfall in revenue in the Social Security system; but it also partially addresses some other major weaknesses, such as the inequities in disability insurance for the blind.

The improvements which we have sought in the disability insurance program should be well known to *Monitor* readers. They involve eliminating any earnings test (or in Social Security terms, any substantial gainful activity test) and standardizing the work requirement to a flat six quarters for all blind people regardless of age. Although these objectives can be stated simply, their scope and potential value are far-reaching. Thus, we have labored long, and we have made substantial progress.

The Social Security Amendments of 1977 take us another step toward realizing our goals. The new law allows blind persons to earn substantially more money before disability benefits are terminated or suspended. Prior to these amendments the amount a blind person could earn was established by Social Security regulations. This amount (for more than three years) has been \$200 per month.

Beginning January 1, 1978, blind people who meet the other eligibility requirements for disability insurance benefits will be able to earn \$333.33 per month (\$4,000 per year) under the more liberal substantial gainful activity test for the blind. This is so because the new law places the substantial gainful activity (or earnings ceiling) for blind people at the same level as the limit on outside earnings for persons who retire at age 65. This ceiling is a good deal higher than the \$200 per month allowed by the old

regulations; but there is more.

Beginning January 1, 1979, the earnings test is increased to \$375 per month, or \$4,500 per year. The following year (1980) it will be \$416.67 per month, which translates to an even \$5,000 annually. In 1981 the level increases again to \$458.33 monthly (\$5,500 annually) and in 1982, blind people will be allowed to earn \$500 per month (or \$6,000 annually) and still keep every penny of disability insurance. For years after 1982, the level of the earnings ceiling will rise to keep pace with inflationary increases in the cost of living. Thus we are now on a steady course of increasing the amount which can be earned by blind beneficiaries of disability insurance.

This is a real victory. Of course it is not all we had hoped for, but it represents real progress. Consider what it means. The income level below which an individual is considered to be living in poverty is \$3,000 a year. Under the old Social Security regulations, a blind person was not even allowed to earn enough to rise out of poverty before disability benefits were cut off, and the average disability benefit for an individual is itself at about the poverty line. Under the new law, even during the first year (when the new ceiling is at its lowest point) annual earnings of as much as \$1,000 above the poverty line for individuals will be permitted, and during the succeeding years the limit is even higher.

Literally thousands of blind people can benefit from this new provision in the Social Security Act. Of course, the roughly 120,000 blind persons who now receive insurance benefits can increase their earnings to the higher amounts permitted, but also those who are earning more than the former \$200 limit but less than the new ceiling can now apply for and receive benefits. As the earnings exemption increases each year, more blind persons will become

eligible, and these are the low-income blind—the people who need it most.

Particularly the blind who work in sheltered workshops will be the immediate beneficiaries. The average income of blind workers in the shops today is about \$3,000 annually. Whenever we discuss the shopworkers' wages, management responds that they hold the wages down so that the blind workers can stay on disability insurance. With the new law, shopworkers will be able to earn \$4,000 this year; and in 1982, they can earn \$6,000. This is not quite as much as an individual would earn working full-time at the minimum wage, but it is mighty close and certainly a lot closer than under the old law.

There is indeed a long way to go to establish in the Social Security Act the principle that disability insurance benefits should be available because of blindness and regardless of earnings, but another step has been taken in that direction. It was not an easy step. In earlier Congresses we have made progress—first by getting the commonly used definition of blindness (20/200 in the better eye, etc.) written into the Social Security Act; and second, by removing the test of recent work (five out of the last ten years) as a qualification for disability insurance. Now the ceiling on earnings has been raised, and it will increase annually. This will place thousands of dollars into the hands of blind people who have been living in poverty.

The forces opposed to this latest step were formidable. There were those who argued against any special new provision for the blind, saying that all persons with whatever disability must be included. Then came the argument that if you include all of the disabled, the costs are too high; the country cannot afford it. The opposition had at its disposal an army of budget analysts, cost accountants, actuaries, and legislative staffers, all of whom were prepared to raise objections. In this particular case, we faced opposition from the Social Security Administration, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and the White House.

In this round of Social Security reform, many of the proposals which have been advanced by others received no attention whatsoever. Some of them were worthy; others, perhaps, were not. But it is no accident that the problems in disability insurance for the blind were a major subject of debate; and that out of it came some positive action. The blind have learned well what it means to organize. If anyone doubts that, let him try to find another explanation for the new, more liberal earnings test in disability insurance.

In recent times we in the NFB have faced an ever-expanding series of challenges—including especially the need to finance our own movement—but these challenges have strengthened our bond of common purpose. We have marched forward not with despair, but with hope and gladness, for the challenges before us are the best testimony to our success. Six months ago a high-ranking official of the American Foundation for the Blind was quoted as saying that the NFB is broke and that we would have to close up shop by the end of 1977. Set this statement alongside the many victories we won last year, and especially beside the new law improving disability insurance for the blind. To this AFB official we say, "Despite the millions in your treasury, what did the Foundation do for the blind in 1977? Did it pass any laws? Did it win any rights?" There is certainly a need for us to work on our financing, but we are a long way from being out of business as a movement.

Undoubtedly the Foundation will try to claim that something it may have said at a hearing one time contributed to the new disability insurance provisions. The American Council of the Blind (in the December issue of the *Braille Forum*) has already done so by reporting on the Senate's passage of our complete proposal to improve disability insurance for the blind. The *Forum* boldly states that "The arguments for the amendment were presented succinctly in a written statement filed by the Affiliated Leadership League of and for the Blind of America."

Notice, there was no mention that the

Federation representative appeared in person at the hearings and that he was joined by 17 members of the House who had become interested in the legislation because they were contacted by Federationists back home. We are familiar with ACB's tactic of riding on our backs. The load gets heavy sometimes, but we are proving that we can carry it.

The December *Forum* article also describes in gloomy terms the prospects for improvements in disability insurance for the blind, predicting that despite the Senate's passage of the entire bill, this year's efforts would be completely unsuccessful. Too bad, they seemed to say; but what can we do about it? We already sent in our written statement.

By contrast, when the Senate adopted

the DIB amendments in early November, we took heart and began to urge acceptance by the Senate-House conference committee. We reinforced our Washington staff with volunteers and phoned Federationists all over the country in order to make one last push. We spent weeks of virtually ceaseless activity, trying to marshal the votes and gain something of value in the final bill.

And we succeeded—in part, at least; and thousands of blind people will benefit directly as a result. Some of them will be ACB members. Indirectly, all blind people will be better off, since an advantage for one of us will often serve as a boost to all of us. For those who would question our purpose or our motives, there is now another answer. Take heart. March forward with pride. The victories will be ours. □

THE RICKARD SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION OPENS

by HOWARD E. MAY

A deserving blind student will win \$1,200 from the Howard Brown Rickard Scholarship Fund this July at the NFB Convention in Baltimore. The scholarship, established by a bequest from Thomas E. Rickard in honor of his father, Howard Brown Rickard, has already helped a number of blind students pursue their careers in college or graduate school. We acknowledge that several fine candidates have failed to win, although deserving. You may try again, if you are studying in the eligible fields, and if you complete the application and return it in time to the committee. The deadline for the receipt of applications is June 1, 1978.

To be eligible for the scholarship, you must be in the studying in the fields of law, medicine, engineering, architecture, or the natural sciences at either the undergraduate or graduate level. You must also

be sponsored by the NFB affiliate in either your home state or the state where you are attending school; and you must be present at the NFB Convention to accept the award.

Copies of this announcement and of the application form can be obtained by writing to the Reverend Howard E. May, Chairman, Rickard Scholarship Committee, R.F.D. 2, Clint Eldredge Road, West Willington, Connecticut 06279; telephone (203) 429-0122. There is an application form in the print edition of this issue of the *Monitor*.

(I also call attention to a new scholarship which is only for blind students at Cornell University. This is the Albert Kuchler Scholarship, and the amount of the award is \$500. Further information about this may be obtained from the Cornell Financial Aid Office or from the chairman of the Rickard Scholarship Committee.) □

HOWARD BROWN RICKARD SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Applicant's full name _____ Age _____ Sex _____

Address _____
Street

City State ZIP Code Phone _____

Home address (permanent) _____
Street

City State ZIP Code Phone _____

High school attended _____ City _____

College you are now attending _____ City _____

Number of units completed by end of present term _____

Colleges previously attended (indicate the year you attended college and the total number of units completed at each college).

_____ From _____ To _____ Units _____

_____ From _____ To _____ Units _____

Major subject _____

List name and amount of any scholarships you have received or are receiving:

Attach the following:

- (1) Transcripts from all colleges you have attended (if you are entering college, attach your high school transcript).
- (2) A statement of 250 words giving your reason for applying for this scholarship and telling how it will assist you to achieve a professional goal, including, if you wish, information about your financial situation. Please include information about your visual acuity indicating whether you are partially or totally blind.
- (3) Recommendation of sponsoring NFB affiliate.

Date

Signature

Make sure all spaces are filled in and mail application by June 1, 1978, to:

REVEREND HOWARD MAY, Chairman
Rickard Scholarship Committee
R.F.D. 2, Clint Eldredge Road
West Willington, Connecticut 06279

ACCREDITING AGENCIES HAVE AWESOME POWER

by SYLVIA PORTER

[This article appeared in newspapers around the country on September 1, 1977, as an installment of Ms. Porter's well-known column "Your Money's Worth." It is reprinted with permission.]

If you're like most Americans, your image of an accrediting agency is of an august, impartial, scientific body of experts, carefully rating academic institutions with absolutely no bias, prejudice, or the slightest taint of conflict of interest.

But is this image always accurate? No!

Rather, because some accrediting agencies controlling private trade schools and correspondence schools include members of the industry involved, there are very real beneath-the-surface dangers.

Say, for instance, that school X is up for review before an accrediting agency consisting, among others, of its competitors Y, Z, and W. Agreed, those sitting in judgment are experts. But this "new boy on the block" trying to edge into the industry to be an active competitor well may be unfairly treated.

School X may be exceedingly unpopular because it has been supporting regulatory proposals that Y, Z, and W oppose and may therefore be in for pocketbook punishment.

School X may have been giving its students too liberal a refund policy in the event the students cancel in mid-course, and also may be in for punishment as a result. The punishment might take the form of an inspection of the school down to an excess smudge on the blackboard—a probe sure to turn up something.

The power of these accrediting commissions can be awesome.

The agencies have the life-and-death authority to decide whether a school is eligible for educational loans to its students under numerous federal programs.

They have the authority to decide whether a school's students are able to obtain veterans' benefits for attending.

Many states also have adopted tough,

strict laws about vocational schools while exempting schools approved by a nationally recognized accrediting agency. Thus, the accrediting body has the power to decide whether a school must comply with what may be burdensome rules or whether it can ignore them to its own benefit.

The power of these accrediting agencies has come under attack in the past. Some years ago, the LaSalle Extension University even filed an anti-trust suit in the District of Columbia against the National Home Study Council which covers correspondence schools. But the suit was withdrawn when LaSalle's accreditation status, which had been lifted, was restored.

The present loopholes in the accreditation situation could be closed. Congress or the state legislatures could change the laws involved. Or the Office of Education within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare—the agency that decides which accrediting bodies will be recognized—could raise its standards. Up to now, the Office of Education has relied on private groups to accredit correspondence schools or other types of vocational schools. This has been most convenient and has had the advantage of including industry members who are acknowledged experts in their own field.

But the Office of Education could alter this policy, even do the job itself. The gain: Greater impartiality, less control of the industry by some of its own members, greater accountability. The loss: Costs would rise, since the work now done by the industry itself (and indirectly paid for by the students) would be done and the tab paid by taxpayers.

Or "sunshine" concepts could be applied to these private groups performing public functions so that we, the public, could scru-

tinize their files and understand controversial decisions.

Or, perhaps most significant of all, you and I could become more intelligently skeptical and challenge our own assumption that all accredited schools are good and all others are bad. The labels we pin on the Good Guys and the Bad Guys are simply too neat for the real-life world in which we pursue

real-life goals.

Whatever, we must pay more attention to the unpublicized role of the accrediting agencies, which in many ways are "secret overlords" of key industries in our society. We should not sit by and fear even to whisper any justifiable doubt as the agencies wield their vast power with so little—if any—accountability to us. □

ARTS FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED: A VIEW FROM THE JUNGLE

by HAROLD SNIDER

Note: Harold Snider is Coordinator of Programs for the Handicapped at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. He was invited to deliver the keynote address at a Conference on Arts for the Blind and Visually Impaired which was held in October 1977 in Los Angeles. The conference was jointly sponsored by the University of California at Los Angeles, the Braille Institute of America, and the American Foundation for the Blind. Mr. Snider was asked to bring a copy of his remarks suitable for publication in the conference proceedings.

The speech was delivered Friday evening, October 21, at the end of the first formal session of the conference. However, the American Foundation for the Blind was not pleased by Mr. Snider's remarks. After he finished, he was approached by William Gallagher of the Foundation who was enraged and who told Mr. Snider that he had made a "vitriolic attack on the most respected agency in work with the blind in the world." (In case any readers are unfamiliar with the Foundation's olympian view of itself, Mr. Gallagher was referring to the AFB.)

Later Mr. Snider was told that in the published conference proceedings there would be no reference to his address. And another man's speech—one delivered on Saturday morning—was going to be promoted to the position of "keynote address." Think of this as you read this speech. It deals with museum programs. It presents information which would be of use and of interest to museum administrators. Mr. Snider does not discuss the most damaging aspects of the AFB's activities by any means; it would have been inappropriate to do so in that forum.

The worst he does is compare the Foundation to a decadent lion. And he suggests—mildly, considering the facts—that the AFB's statements about full integration of the blind do not correspond to its custodial practices. Yet even this was too much. It was not enough to edit the speech, or reply to it; the AFB felt it had to suppress it altogether and pretend it had never happened. Indeed, despite the disclaimer which begins the speech, the AFB did protest to Mr. Snider's employer.

This treatment of views it doesn't want to hear is the sort of behavior which denies the AFB the respect it so arrogantly claims. ■

(I am very glad to be here to talk to you about arts for the blind and visually impaired. The opinions which I express are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Smithsonian Institution. I know that some of you will disagree with what I have to say, but that disagreement should be with me and not my employer.)

It was dark in the jungle of the blind. Only the sounds of braillewriters, Optacons, tape recorders, talking calculators, and other gadgetry could be heard. In the midst of the jungle, by the watering hole of money, ideas, and hard work, two lions prepared to do battle. One lion was very old, fat but still strong, bedecked with honors of gold and precious jewels, mangy and decadent. The other lion was young, thin, vigorous, and muscular, in the prime of life, clad in armor made of distrust, bitterness, custodialism, and paternalism.

Both lions were clever. They were the leaders of the two largest prides of lions in the jungle of the blind. The agencies for the blind were led, naturally, by the American Foundation for the Blind, with their "company union," the American Council of the Blind. The blind people themselves were led by the National Federation of the Blind, the largest organization of blind people in the world. Those of you who know little about the jungle of the blind might find it incomprehensible that the two great lions should do battle instead of living and working in peace with one another. Yet, knowing the feelings of the blind of this nation, I would say to you that the battle has been forced upon us, and we will fight if we must.

"And they say there is no discrimination, that we are not a minority. Yet we know who we are, and we will never go back." So said Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, immediate past President of the National Federation of the Blind, in his annual banquet address to the National Convention in 1975. The National Federation of the Blind was founded in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, in 1940. Today it has affiliates in every state and the District of Columbia, 450 chapters, and 50,000 members. It is the largest and most important organization in the field of blindness.

Those of you attending this conference on arts for the blind and visually impaired must now be wondering why I have started on such a political theme, why I have interjected the internecine struggle between agencies and blind people into these remarks. My reason for doing so is that this struggle, including opposing philosophies of work with the blind in the arts, is all pervasive in the blindness system. You must understand how I see the agencies' stance on arts for the blind and how we as blind people see our participation in the arts. I want to share with you some of the philosophy which I follow in providing effective programs for blind visitors at the Smithsonian Institution and some of the research which the Smithsonian has undertaken. I believe that this philosophy can and will be a model for arts programs wishing to meet the needs of blind people.

The first working premise behind successful museum programs for blind visitors is that it is essential to listen exclusively to the authentic elected voice of blind people. No agency for the blind, however well intentioned, can ever speak for the blind. They can, maybe, speak *with* the blind, but never *for* them. Just as the Department of Agriculture cannot speak for farmers, the American Foundation for the Blind cannot speak for blind people. Just as the National Farmers Union is elected to speak for farmers, so is the National Federation of the Blind elected to speak on behalf of blind people. My premise is, then, that no expert in the field of work with the blind can ever speak on behalf of blind people, even if such expert is blind himself. Only those persons elected to represent blind people can speak on their behalf.

Thus, museum programs for blind visitors must be consumer-based programs—that is, only blind people themselves can tell museums what they want. No agency can do that. So, when weighing input in the form of suggestions for museum programs, letters from blind people should be taken seriously, answered promptly, and put on top of the pile of correspondence. Letters from agencies for the blind should be taken less seriously, answered less promptly, and put on the bottom of the pile of correspondence. I believe that these methods are the best way to prioritize input.

My second working premise is that museums should do nothing which would in any way segregate the blind visitor from the rest of the visitors. If blind persons wish to visit in groups with other blind people, then they are segregating themselves. For the most part, museums do not and definitely should not operate any segregated exhibits, rooms, or galleries for the blind. After several decades of experience, museums have found that segregated exhibits are a waste of time, money, and effort. Museum programs which are federally funded may not segregate blind visitors in any way. Otherwise, they will be in violation of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

In general, segregated exhibits are very poorly done, giving blind persons a second-class view of the museum or exhibition. I believe that segregated exhibits only perpetuate the myths and stereotypes about blindness as a disease—that the blind like the leper must be kept away from society.

The third working premise which should be followed is that museums must do their best to give blind visitors, either singly or in groups, the alternative techniques and tools which they need in order to make use of the museum. For example, tours on cassette tape should be prepared which reproduce in an audio format the exact print exhibit labels for each gallery. These tours should not contain mobility information, because every blind person uses somewhat different mobility and orientation techniques. Blind visitors may have varying degrees of residual or peripheral vision, so giving mobility information is useless. Many blind visitors can see exhibits but cannot read the labels. Braille, large print, or cassette editions of museum literature should be prepared for sale or for free. If a museum brochure is given to the sighted public, then it should also be given to blind visitors in a form which can be read by them. If a museum sells a guidebook to the public in its museum shop, then it should be sold in a non-print format to the blind visitors for the same price. It is possible to sell or give away Braille or cassette editions of museum literature without significant increase in cost to the museum. Museums need not subsidize Braille or cassette literature to sell it for the same price as its print equivalent. Provision of literature for blind visitors gives them an equal, inclusive, and non-privileged opportunity to learn more about the museum.

A building model of the museum and its exhibition galleries is helpful to orient blind visitors to their surroundings. A list of touchable exhibits should be provided so that there is no misunderstanding about what may or may not be touched. Scale models and raised-line drawings are sometimes useful to explain non-touchable exhibits. In addition, Braille and speech output from

computer terminals used in the museum is possible and should be considered.

The fourth working premise is that in training either staff or volunteers to work with blind visitors, an intensive effort must be made to force the trainee to accept the blind visitor as a person first, with the blindness as a secondary characteristic. By using intensive encounter group therapy models, an attitude change can be created which enables staff or volunteers to overcome their prejudices and stereotyped images of the blind. I insist that blind visitors must be treated as people first.

The Smithsonian Institution has been involved in some very interesting research activities related to museum programs for handicapped visitors. I am currently the director of a project funded by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped of the U.S. Office of Education in HEW. The purpose of the project is to write guidelines that museum educators, arts administrators, and special education teachers can use in developing and implementing museum programs for handicapped students. The outcome of the 18-month study is a publication entitled *Museums and Handicapped Students: Guidelines for Educators*. This publication will be of general interest to all handicapped people and to everyone involved in work with the handicapped. It will let them know what they should be expecting from their local museums and arts organizations. We will publish several thousand copies of the book, and everyone is welcome to a free copy.

In the book we include a complete survey of literature about museum programs for handicapped students, as well as a summary of federal legislation affecting museum programs for all handicapped visitors. We also are presenting chapters on three surveys which we administered—to special education teachers, to museums across the country, and to handicapped consumers themselves. We did not survey agencies for the blind. Only 25 percent of the museums in this country welcome handicapped students. Only half of the special education teachers surveyed had ever thought of using museums

as a resource. And only one half of the consumers surveyed thought that they would be welcome in a museum. In addition, there are five chapters which present specific guidelines and recommendations for the development and implementation of museum programs for handicapped students. Each chapter presents guidelines and recommendations for a different disability group. I invite you to write to me for a free copy of the publication. Please send your requests as soon as possible.

Two very worthwhile organizations which may be of help to you are the National Committee—Arts for the Handicapped and the Arts and the Handicapped Information Service. Literature about these organizations is available from my office. I serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Committee—Arts for the Handicapped, along with Jean Kennedy Smith and other distinguished Americans. I have also written a number of articles about arts programs for blind and handicapped visitors, including the first section of the pamphlet “Arts for the Blind and Visually Impaired,” which is available from the Arts and the Handicapped Information Service.

There remains for me one vital issue to deal with, and that is the movement of national exhibitions of art by the blind. It is my personal view that such exhibits perform a distinct disservice to the blind of this nation and only foster a stereotyped image of blindness. These special segregated exhibits do not heighten awareness. Art done by blind persons should be, and for the most part is, in the mainstream of art done in this country. We don't need special exhibitions; we don't need the charitable pat on the head.

Both the American Foundation for the Blind and the National Federation of the Blind have published policy statements condemning segregated exhibits for the blind in museums. But, as usual, the American Foundation for the Blind is speaking out of

both sides of its mouth simultaneously. How can you, on the one hand, condemn segregated exhibits for the blind, and then sponsor, help pay for, and promote national exhibitions of art by the blind which are showcased in segregated settings and are segregated in terms of participation, only including blind artists? Skeptics should contrast the 1972 American Foundation for the Blind policy statements against segregated exhibits for the blind with the catalogue for the First National Exhibition of Art by the Blind, which lists Mr. Edward Rausch of the AFB as a trustee and advisor. The Foundation even sent out a press release promoting the exhibition. You cannot have it both ways. This duplicity and prevarication is but one small example of why the blind of this nation tend to distrust many agencies. It is my view that not only has the American Foundation for the Blind misrepresented itself and deceived us, but that the Foundation is finally showing its true colors by helping to sponsor and promote national exhibitions of art by the blind.

Finally, I would like to thank Martin Isaacson and the Braille Institute of America for inviting me to speak with you. I commend him for organizing this conference, and I wish this conference all the success it deserves. I would like to remind you that the blind of this nation are watching you and what you do here and what the outcome of this conference might be. Please keep in mind that many blind people consider the arts and museums fairly low priorities in their struggle for freedom. Social Security, a good education, and the search for a job are the essentials of that struggle. However, blind people will not allow agencies to use arts programs as the frosting on their public relations and fundraising cakes. Yes, the blind are a minority, but we know who we are, and we will never go back.

This is my view of the lions as they do battle in the jungle of the blind. □

AROUND THE COUNTRY WITH NAC

In addition to the demonstrations in Phoenix and New York City, reported in last month's *Monitor*, there were other significant confrontations with NAC last fall. The blind of Ohio turned out in numbers to protest the decision by the Toledo Society for the Blind to seek NAC "accreditation." The blind of the District of Columbia and the states surrounding marched in front of the NAC-accredited Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind, in protest of its

re-accreditation by NAC and as part of a continuing project to reform that agency. But perhaps most significant of all was a meeting of the governing board of Illinois' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation at which it was discussed whether DVR would require that private agencies from which the State of Illinois purchases services have NAC "accreditation." Here, then, are reports on these events from people who took part in them.

OHIO: NAC ON THE INSIDE; CONSUMERS ON THE OUTSIDE

by MARC MAURER

On November 7 the National Accreditation Council sent an on-site review team to the Toledo Society for the Blind for a routine approval of its sheltered workshop prior to "accreditation." Federationists in Toledo learned of this visit six days earlier, and there was a good deal of dissatisfaction with the decision of the Toledo Society to associate itself with NAC. We asked Don Norwood, the executive director of the Society, to discuss this decision with us. He declined to talk about it, except to say that the Society would be accredited. He was unwilling to discuss any aspect of the NAC "accreditation" process; he simply refused to talk about it. No blind consumer had been consulted about the decision. As a matter of form, a letter was sent to the Toledo Federation of the Blind inviting us to participate in a meeting of consumers and NAC. This pro-forma meeting is part of the charade of NAC's process, and the 10-year history of relations with NAC and the stories of such "consumer meetings" held in other states showed us what a futile gesture this one would be. The blind met, but not with NAC.

As expressed by one Federationist, "We heard about the on-site visit late Tuesday, we tried to meet with Mr. Norwood on Wednesday, we decided something must be

done on Thursday, we laid our plans on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, and we marched on Monday. Fifty blind consumers carrying picket signs and chanting slogans expressed to the public and the press their opinion of NAC and the Toledo Society for the Blind. We distributed leaflets describing the disreputable practices of NAC and the Society. The press coverage was good. Newspaper reporters and radio and television crews were all on hand to get the story from blind consumers speaking for themselves.

Officials of the Toledo Society tried to persuade us to come inside to meet with the NAC team, whose members were Joe Pike, executive director of the Albany Association for the Blind; Marion Campbell, an official of the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind; Ann Barber of the NAC staff; and Walter Boninger of the Cleveland Society for the Blind. This transparent attempt to get us off the street—where our actions had some impact—and into the meeting—where our actions have no impact—failed. The blind wished to tell the public about the Society and NAC. Neither of these agencies will listen to us, so we intend to speak to everyone who will listen. The strong united action of the blind community and the speed with which we responded

to the threat of NAC sends a message loud and clear: NAC will not be tolerated by the

blind. Wherever NAC shows itself, the blind will be there. □

WASHINGTON, D.C.: UNINVITED GUESTS AT THE LIGHTHOUSE PARTY

by DONALD MCCONNELL

The January 1976 *Monitor* reported on the demonstration at the ground-breaking ceremonies for a new \$2 million building for the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind. In the weeks before that public ceremony, the NFB of the District of Columbia had been trying to convince the Lighthouse that its association with NAC hurts the blind. It was not a discussion that was likely to bear much fruit, for the reason that the Lighthouse is one of those agencies that uses "accreditation" to lend an air of respectability to custodial and exploitative practices. It runs a sheltered shop which pays its workers about half the minimum wage. It provides rehabilitation services under contract to the District government, and it would be safe to say that blind persons in the nation's capital receive as poor services as exist anywhere in the country. Add to this that the Columbia Lighthouse is the darling of Washington high society which contributed handsomely to put up a lavish new facility and to pay high salaries for the sighted administrators, and you have the pattern for half the big-city lighthouses in the country.

In November 1975, as the groundbreaking day approached, the Lighthouse director, Charles Fegan, kept telling us he would take no further action about NAC without letting us know. Then, on the last possible day, the Lighthouse paid its NAC dues. The blind, in answer, turned out in force for the groundbreaking. When the District's mayor, Walter Washington, arrived, so did the television cameras. In a public relations gesture, the mayor walked up to Federationist Keith Howard and put his arm around him for the cameras. Keith asked him, "Would you be mayor for \$1.06 per hour?" The startled mayor said he wouldn't and promised to look into the problems

at the Lighthouse.

Now, two years later, nothing had changed except that the new building was completed. Mr. Fegan had gone through the same game about NAC re-accreditation. He told us last spring that he wasn't sure whether the Lighthouse would be re-accredited and that the on-site inspection had been postponed a number of times. (He meant, it turned out, that it had been postponed until the building was completed.) Later, in the fall, during a tour of the Lighthouse, he said he wasn't sure if the NAC dues had been paid yet. On questioning, it turned out he meant that he didn't know whether his secretary had actually mailed the check yet. The mayor had taken no action: the Lighthouse board had for two years refused to meet with the NFB.

When the new building opened, the Lighthouse held a spur-of-the-moment housewarming, with no public announcement and private invitations to the press. The blind of the city found out about it only when pictures appeared in the *Washington Post*. This was the background to the demonstration which took place on December 1:

Word reached us only a few days earlier that the Lighthouse was planning a party on an even grander scale than the groundbreaking. An article which appeared in the *Post* the next day, written by the social reporter, will give an idea of the affair. It began:

"Last New Year's Washington Socialite Page Lee Hufty made a New Year's resolution. 'I decided that I wasn't going to any parties where there was press.' So she pretty much didn't. She kept a low profile. She painted. And then last night Hufty threw a party and invited the press herself. Along

with about half of Washington—all of whom, it seemed, showed up at the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind for an exhibition of Hufty's watercolor paintings and the dedication of the Frances and Page Hufty Service Center (named after her parents) in that building. The Lighthouse is the Hufty family's favorite charity."

But there were some uninvited guests at the Lighthouse party. Not that we weren't expected. When the first Federationists showed up at five p.m., they were greeted by four helmeted policemen, two Lighthouse staffers wearing trenchcoats and carrying walkie-talkies, and several other sighted Lighthouse employees in the background. A police motorcycle was up on the sidewalk and two police cars were at the curb. It makes you wonder what they expected us to do. Through the plate-glass wall of the lobby of the new building we could see Page Lee Hufty greeting the first arrivals. As the *Post* reported:

"For her part Hufty was giggly-giddy really—as she whirled around the room in her fuschia Ungaro, borrowed right off the rack from the designer himself when he was in town. In between greeting guests, Hufty talked about what it was like to be, in the words of Rep. Newton Steers (R-Md.), 'Washington's number one social celebrity next to Elizabeth [Taylor] Warner.' . . . According to Hufty, she is a 'great believer in keeping an idea of where one is at.'"

Well, where she was at changed after we began marching in front of the building and chanting "The Lighthouse exploits the blind." First the greeting of guests was moved to an inner room, and then the shades were drawn. The real flood of guests began arriving around six. They drove up in sports cars and chauffeured limousines. As each car arrived, one of the trench-coated Lighthouse staffers would run out into the street to keep the driver from changing his mind after seeing the picket lines. Then the cars were told to drive to the back of the Lighthouse and enter that way to avoid us.

This was a high-rolling crowd. As the *Post* reported: "Among those on hand was

Hufty's pal, Joquine Lachman, wife of Revlon cosmetics tycoon Charles Lachman, who although she said she had no problem getting in from Acapulco for the opening, was having considerably more trouble trying to arrange a New York rendezvous with the Ford Theater's Frankie Hewitt. 'Darling, I'm afraid the 7th is impossible. We won't be in New York. We're invited by the King of Morocco for dinner that night.'"

Many of the guests threaded their way through our lines as if they feared they would be soiled. But many others stopped to take our handbills and talk about why we were there. Judy Sanders, who was in town for the day to talk to Congressmen about disability insurance, stood as near to the door as the police would allow her, handing out leaflets. A television reporter asked her to move inside so she could film an interview away from the chanting. Mrs. Sanders and Joie Stuart, president of the NFB of D.C., walked in the door, with Mrs. Stuart still carrying her picket sign reading "Abandon Hope, All Blind Who Enter Here." Officials of the Lighthouse came running. They tried to lead the reporter away and get the Federationists back outside. When the reporter refused to go along, they produced their own blind person to answer the NFB charges. And who do you suppose it was—this blind person who was ready to defend subminimum wages and custodial treatment for his fellow blind men and women? It was Oral Miller, board member of the American Council of the Blind and member of the Lighthouse board of directors. It was a classic scene.

The *Post* reported: "And although many of the guests were simply loathe to cross the picket lines outside (the Lighthouse is non-union, the picketers weren't), they did in order to sip champagne and gaze at the 40 paintings, mostly landscapes and seascapes, and two lithographs hanging in the brightly lit dining room turned art gallery."

This *Post* article we have been quoting led Joie Stuart to write a letter to the editors of the newspaper. It was not published, which is not surprising considering the

social position of the people we were dealing with, but we will publish part of it here. It read as follows:

"The lack of a union in the Lighthouse workshop was far from being the only reason for our protest—no Lighthouse in the country is unionized. The 30 blind persons from D.C., Virginia, and Maryland who marched outside were protesting what we consider the subhuman conditions our fellow blind were laboring under inside. The blind workers in the Lighthouse do not receive even near the minimum wage. The starting wage there is \$1.20 an hour—about one-half minimum wage. This is increased 5 percent a year—less than the rate of increase of the cost of living. In a cosmetic action a few days before the party, four workers were finally raised to the minimum wage—four out of over 30 workers.

"The Columbia Lighthouse, in the view of the blind of the area, is a sham. It raises enormous amounts of money from the wealthy of the District (and receives large amounts from the District government) on the basis that it helps the blind. As it was doing Thursday night, the Lighthouse raises this money by peddling the traditional image of blindness as a tragedy which causes helplessness and strips one of the ability to participate in the normal world. (It is our experience as blind persons that this widely held notion is the major disadvantage of blindness, not the loss of sight.) Yet the attitudes blind people encounter in the Lighthouse reinforce this 'tragedy' view. Blind workers are paid pittance wages and treated with contempt. The sighted administrators and 'professional' workers with the blind—the real beneficiaries of the charity of the public—receive handsome wages and every other advantage of first-class employment.

"To see the problem in a nutshell, look at what happened last Thursday night. The cream of Washington society was invited by Page Lee Hufty to attend an open house, complete with expensively catered food, an art exhibition, and the blind at work. The blind shopworkers, on the other hand,

were simply told they would be working late that day. They were given name tags to wear and told to stay at their machines. No champagne and catered fare for them—that afternoon they were asked if they wanted hamburgers from McDonald's. The resulting scene was worthy of Fellini: The city's rich, protected by helmeted policemen and Lighthouse staff members with walkie-talkies, were rushed—still in their limousines—past the picket lines and ushered in from the back. Then they picked up their champagne, met their jet-set friends, and together toured the Lighthouse to see the 'poor blind' on display with their name tags.

"Such degrading activities by agencies set up to 'help' the blind are more and more being recognized by the blind as our major barrier to normal life. No one at Ms. Hufty's party would be likely to consider hiring a blind person for a responsible job. No blind person who was on display that night could go through the experience without getting the message that he is subnormal. According to your reporter, the Columbia Lighthouse is Ms. Hufty's 'favorite charity.' The blind have other words for it."

This protest made a couple of things clear to those who took part. First is the obvious point that what NAC is satisfied to label "quality service" and "consumer input" is a far cry from what those terms mean in places where progressive programs do exist and where blind people are emerging from the backwaters and entering the mainstream of community life. Washington, D.C., is a strange place in this respect. The federal government, in what so far can only be called token efforts to involve the handicapped in its departments, has recruited a small number of blind people who have been trained elsewhere and who have already made their way in the world.

By contrast, the blind people who live in the District have miserable training programs available to them. Most of the blind people in the Lighthouse workshop have never been given a chance; they do not even have an idea that conditions could be better. They feel grateful for the opportunity to get

out of their homes and do something—anything at all; and this gratitude is no doubt very pleasant for their sighted keepers.

There is no need in a situation like this to employ the cruder forms of intimidation. (Although the Lighthouse director, when there were rumors of protest two years ago, announced that the Lighthouse for 75 years had depended on the loyalty of its staff, and it was going to stay that way.) But when the administration wants to punish a worker, it spreads the word that any change in the operation will be mean the shop will close, and the workers will be out on the street. Thus the workers help keep each other in line, all to the benefit of the well-paid staff. One result of this took place the weekend after our protest. A campaign of hate calls descended on Joie Stuart to the point that she finally left her phone off the hook. Her crime is that she was once employed by the Lighthouse and has progressed to a responsible position in the U.S. Department of Labor. Yet she has not turned her back on the blind people she knew and worked with.

This is one lesson that grew out of our protest, although it is one Federationists already know. There are costs to be paid in any struggle by a minority to gain their rights and to gain first-class citizenship. They are real costs—often the sacrifice of jobs and security to gain jobs and security. Yet they are costs we have counted long since; and considering what we fight for, the cost is not too high.

The second lesson is that the structure of agencies such as the Columbia Lighthouse—based as they are on the support of the wealthy and influential—gives them both strengths and weaknesses. On the one hand, it is easy for the Lighthouse to raise money for buildings, for staff salaries, or for extravagant parties such as the one we attended. Their directing boards are often little enclaves of the philanthropically minded rich. It is not difficult to understand why the staffs of such agencies would prefer to keep this arrangement, rather than to allow rank-and-file blind persons to take part in the

operation of the agency. The experience of those who have been involved in directing an agency which tries to make a difference in the lives of the blind people it serves shows that it is hard, energy-consuming work. The rewards are not invitations to jet-set parties but participating in the progress in people's lives. It means associating with your clients on a personal level and believing in their abilities and taking their part in their battles.

Many of the people chosen to run the wealthy, traditional agencies are drawn either from the ranks of the wealthy or from the graduate school laboratory. The loss of status, or imagined superiority, involved in being a real partisan of your blind clients takes a larger spirit and a broader view than these administrators possess. "How can I help you fight an employer who believes you are a helpless cripple? For one thing, I agree with him, and for another, he may be a friend of Page Lee Hufty's."

But the other side of this is that the rich who support the Lighthouses and Happy Homes do so with no thought about it. To them the blind are a worthy charity, and any agency with the word "blind" in its name must be a good cause. The Lighthouses depend on their friends remaining ignorant. And it is up to us to educate them. The encouraging part of our protest in D.C. was the number of wealthy guests who were seriously concerned that the very people they thought would be most grateful were out picketing. Particularly the younger guests at the party refused to go in before hearing what we had to say. When the Lighthouse officials offered to throw away the leaflets they had been handed, they refused and kept them to read later. Some people even decided not to attend the party at all.

It is not our purpose to bankrupt agencies like the Columbia Lighthouse. But these agencies must be forced to take a look at what they are doing, and the only way this can happen in too many instances is if we can cut through the comfortable layer of philanthropic fat which keeps

them warm and happy and keeps the blind out in the cold. Is the public against us? Not

when they know who we are are what we are fighting for. □

NAC REJECTED IN ILLINOIS

by JAMES GASHEL

The governing board of the Illinois Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) voted late in October to designate the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) as the accrediting body which it would use to measure the performance of agencies in Illinois which provide services under contract with the state. This order includes agencies for the blind as well as those which serve other disabilities. The ruling covers, for example, the Chicago Lighthouse, saying in effect that its NAC accreditation is not sufficient to give the citizens of Illinois any confidence that quality services are being offered in return for taxpayers' dollars. The Lighthouse will now have to be accredited by CARF, assuming, that is, that it wishes to do business with the State of Illinois.

The board's October decision was the final action taken after a thorough review of the agency's policy on accreditation. Earlier in the year, James Jeffers (the state director of vocational rehabilitation) had notified all agencies providing services under contract with the state that they would have to achieve or maintain accreditation from a nationally recognized body—namely, CARF for those serving the disabled generally, and NAC for those serving the blind. This position was said to be consistent with the policy in several other states and with a resolution of the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR).

Indeed, these statements were true on their face—the CSAVR does have a six-year-old resolution calling for accreditation and some states have observed it. But the Illinois DVR is a unique agency—unique in that it has a board to hire the state vocational rehabilitation director, to set broad policy, and to review decisions. And unique also in that

the board is largely made up of consumers representing the major disability groups. One of those consumer representatives is Steve Benson, well known to many Federationists as a leader in our Illinois affiliate.

When the IDVR board learned of director Jeffers' decision to require accreditation, it chose to review the matter. Specifically, concern was expressed that NAC would not be an acceptable accrediting body for agencies serving the blind. There was general awareness among the board members of NAC's problems—many remembered the events at the Chicago Lighthouse a year earlier—so NAC was invited to appear before the board to explain its operations and to answer questions. President Sanders asked me to appear as the NFB representative, so I went and discussed the problems with NAC.

If you think about it, it is hard for NAC to make a convincing case for the contention that its accreditation ensures quality services for the blind or that accreditation has anything to do with improvements. One need only cite the well-documented shabby practices of agencies associated with NAC.

Heading the list is the Cleveland Society for the Blind which still finds itself in court for what the blind regard as clear-cut violations of the Randolph-Sheppard Act, including illegal set-aside charges, requiring vendors to contribute to the United Fund (from which the Society benefits), and so on.

Next, there is the Minneapolis Society and the widely publicized Kettner case which showed once and for all that an agency can violate federal regulations and not hear a word of criticism from NAC. More recently the Minneapolis Society was found to have broken Minnesota State law (in matters concerning membership and election of its

board), but the NAC accreditation continues without question.

Then there is Clovernook. It was accredited by NAC during the height of public outrage and criticism in the media over a variety of custodial practices. Chief among the objections was the handling of SSI checks through a system of requiring the residents to sign the checks and then to turn over to Clovernook all (or substantially all) of the proceeds. It was also reported that the Social Security Administration had found substantial irregularities in Clovernook's reporting of wages and in the payment of Social Security (FICA) taxes. Yet the NAC accreditation sailed through, ignoring the storm of protests from the blind and the public at large.

Of course, there are many other agencies which, despite NAC accreditation (one might almost say, because of it), have adopted policies in conflict with the best interests of the blind. The Chicago Lighthouse, for example, having run for cover under NAC's protective wing, now stands as its chief defender, hoping to stave off the inevitable move by the shopworkers to organize a collective bargaining unit. The Lighthouse is notorious for drawing a sharp distinction between employees and clients a distinction which is more artificial than real and which hurts the blind although it is convenient for the Lighthouse since "clients" obviously should not expect to receive the minimum wage and fringe benefits. Yet the Lighthouse is NAC-accredited, never mind its disregard for the workers' right to organize. In fact, the Lighthouse admits NAC helped keep the union out.

We have long known the weight of this and similar evidence which shows the true colors of NAC. If people would only have listened years ago as they are beginning to listen today, as they listened in Illinois.

I was the only NFB representative to appear before the IDVR board. By contrast, NAC called out all the forces it could muster, apparently using the philosophy that if you can't win with your arguments,

you better try to do it with numbers. In addition to Ann Barber, who was described as a staff associate from NAC headquarters in New York, there was Fred McDonald of Chicago Lighthouse fame. There was also a representative from the Illinois Association of Rehabilitation Facilities—an organization of workshops and similar agencies serving the disabled. There were even a few members of the Illinois Federation of the Blind (the ACB affiliate), which is only to be expected since wherever NAC goes, there too you will find the ACB. Oh yes, let me not forget, there was also the AFB, represented by Jessamine Cobb, head of AFB's Chicago office. Federationists are well familiar with this entire cast of characters or at least the organizations they represent.

But the IDVR board was more impressed with reasons than people. The thrust of the presentation by NAC and its representatives was exactly what you would expect. It began with a rather self-serving commendation of IDVR director Jeffers for his recognition of NAC, but the tone quickly changed to a recitation of the usual attacks on NFB and its leaders.

Fred McDonald began by speaking for the "Independent Blind of Illinois." He had a letter with 64 names on it praising Jeffers and applauding NAC. Dennis Schreiber was described as the president of the group. He works for Fred McDonald at the Lighthouse, as Federationists know. Under questioning from the board, Mr. McDonald also had to admit that a sizable number of the so-called "Independent Blind" are employees of the Lighthouse, and others work for state agencies. For example, Floyd Cargill (head of the Division of Services for the Blind in IDVR) was one of these 64. But the crowning blow came for Fred when someone thought to ask if the names on his letter were typed or if each individual had personally approved the letter and indicated that approval by signing it. Well, what do you think? You guessed it, the names were not signed; they were typed. This kind of evidence and 25 cents, in a court of law, might get you a cup of coffee, but it will

likely not keep you out of jail.

Ann Barber of NAC was questioned at length. Board members wanted to know if NAC had ever withdrawn accreditation from an agency after finding that the services were not of a high quality. The questioning went to the heart of NAC's contention that it has improved services for the blind, and the point was made that if NAC were truly doing all it claimed, it probably would have been compelled to withdraw some agency's accreditation at some point during the last 11 years. After all, it was argued, if you are really trying to make people change and improve, you ought to have demonstrated some clout. So the question was put: Has NAC ever withdrawn any agency's accreditation? Ann Barber was in a spot, and she knew it. Because, you see, the truth is that NAC's accreditation has nothing whatsoever to do with clout or quality, and when pushed to it, she had to admit NAC has never removed an agency from its accredited list—except, of course, where an agency itself asked to be taken off.

NAC's discomfort with such probing inquiries was obvious, so it was no surprise when the NACsters opened fire on the NFB. After all, the thinking goes, "NAC is a fine outfit; the real trouble in work with the blind is the NFB. Without the Federation there would be peace." Actually, this thought was expressed in bitter tones more than once. Fred McDonald said that the NFB is the single force holding back progress for the blind. But Jessamine Cobb of the AFB summed it up by saying: "[The NFB] represents only that part of the blind population which is known for protest and has become an obstacle to the orderly advancement of services for the blind."

This statement by AFB and the NACsters tells it all. It places them in quite a lofty position, looking down on the poor, misguided blind; but the IDVR was not to be fooled. So virulent and in such poor taste were the attacks on NFB and its leaders that one board member (a handicapped person in a wheelchair) finally cut them off by

observing that the NFB was not on trial. She explained (with the patience one would need to reproach a naughty child) that the board was trying to determine if NAC was an adequate or appropriate body to accredit agencies serving the blind; and in this connection, the testimony of NFB was relevant.

And so it went with NAC. When the final vote was cast, no one present was willing to affirm director Jeffers' original decision—the board determined that CARF would be asked to accredit all agencies, including agencies serving the blind.

Two weeks later at NAC's annual membership and board meeting in Phoenix, there was not a word from NAC leaders about the Illinois decision. Instead, there was much talk of progress. To hear the report of the Committee for Advancement of Standards, one would think that the majority of agencies are joyously rallying to the cause of NAC accreditation.

The Committee's failure to report the Illinois decision reminds one that it also neglected to disclose the recent rejection of NAC's request for federal funding by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped. While one might reasonably expect NAC leaders to put the best face on things, there remains something to be said for honesty and especially from a group which is run by people who proclaim their ethics and objectivity. Hiding the truth will not make it go away, for it is as true today as when Shakespeare wrote over 300 years ago, that "Time shall unfold what plighted cunning hides; Who covers faults, at last shame them derides."

NAC cannot ignore what happened in Illinois. The blind now know and the agencies know. Jessamine Cobb said it best when praising director Jeffers for his decision to recognize NAC. She called it a landmark step and a precedent which other states would certainly follow. We agree. The decision in Illinois is indeed a landmark, but hardly of the type Miss Cobb had in mind. Hopefully, too, it will serve as a precedent for other states. And we must make it so. □

MICHIGAN CONVENTION

by ELBERT and MARY LOU PHILLIPS

The 1977 convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Michigan was held October 21 through 23 at the Howard Johnson Motor Lodge in downtown Detroit. The weekend's activities were kicked off to an enthusiastic start with the final hearing of the legislature's special house investigating committee on the proposed transfer of the Office of Services for the Blind (OSB) from the Department of Social Services to the Department of Education. The hearing began at ten o'clock in the morning and was attended by many Federationists. Representing the NFB of Michigan was state president Allen Harris. Representing the NFB nationally was John McCraw, Executive Committee member from Baltimore. Supporting testimony from members and friends of the Federation followed their presentations.

Enthusiasm continued to mount as convention activities began Friday afternoon with a well-attended resolutions committee meeting, followed in the evening by an equally well-attended executive committee meeting. This meeting as well as the rest of the convention was very much brightened and made more informative because of the Federationist spirit of John McCraw and of John Taylor from Iowa.

The first program item on Saturday morning was a report by Allen Harris on the proposed transfer of the Office of Services for the Blind. John Taylor then discussed the topic "What should we expect from an agency serving the blind?" Harold Payne, director of OSB, reviewed the agency's current programs and future plans. Paul Glatz, superintendent of the Michigan Rehabilitation Center for the Blind, shared his feelings toward the proposed transfer of services.

Jim Obranovic, facilities specialist with OSB, reviewed facility grants and future programs. Lyle Thume, director of blind services at the Rehabilitation Institute of Detroit, described the role of a private agency

in work for the blind. He was followed by Peter Hendricks, an advisor in the Chrysler training program. John McCraw then presented a report from our National Office.

Civil Service procedures for hiring blind applicants at the national level were reviewed by John Taylor; on the state level, they were discussed by Loren Graham; and at the county level by Don McGee. We were pleased that Loren Graham's remarks included an apology for not being allowed by his superiors to appear at previous NFB meetings. Roosevelt Johnson of Detroit discussed hiring by Civil Service from the approach of affirmative action. Winifred Avery and Brenda Aikens discussed the role of local civil rights agencies, and J. Michael O'Brien talked about placement of blind people by private agencies. Richard Stone, personnel supervisor with Michigan Bell Telephone, described his company's program for hiring the blind. Bill Simon, supervisor of OSB in Wayne County, participated in discussions throughout the day.

Our conventions get bigger and better each year. By Saturday evening, over 100 had registered, and 126 attended our banquet. Our dedication to the movement was evidenced by new and increased PAC Plan pledges.

The convention reached its highest point with John McCraw's banquet address, "The Blind—An Emerging Minority: Why We Will Never Go Back." Allen Harris kept things very much alive as master of ceremonies. Four new chapters received their charters. We welcome the fellowship and strength of these chapters. The banquet was followed by a lively dance.

The Sunday morning business session included an interesting talk by Harold Snider of the Smithsonian Institution. The following officers and delegates were elected: Elbert Phillips, second vice-president; board members at large Steve Handschu, Geer

Wilcox, Joy Parobek, and Larry Posont. We were pleased to have so many people attending from out of state, and we would like to

extend a warm and hearty invitation to all for our next convention which will be held in Saginaw. □

CONNECTICUT CONVENTION

The annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Connecticut was held Saturday, November 12, 1977, at the Holiday Inn in Hartford. Guests from our neighbor affiliates in New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island came to share the experience with us.

Some 77 persons attended the banquet at noon, including several state legislators and Connecticut Congressman Christopher Dodd. They heard Rami Rabby, NFB Second Vice-President, deliver a stirring speech. Since Jonathan May and state president Howard May share a birthday on November 12, the gathering sang "Happy Birthday" to them.

In the afternoon session, organized and chaired by Jonathan May, the theme was "Education of the blind child in Connecticut." The program opened with a showing of the NFB film, depicting our philosophy of the education and training of blind persons. A large panel of experts was present to speak. Dr. Les Horvath and Dr. Virginia Guldager, both of the State Department of Education, spoke about federal special education legislation and its application in this state. Dr. Robert Long, chief of children's services in the state agency for the blind, and Ms. Linda Almasy, senior consultant in children's services, spoke on work with blind and visually impaired children in the public school room and the agency's role as consultant to the public schools. Two public school teachers who had taught visually impaired children—Mrs. Trudy Aarons and Mrs. Jeanne Garrison—told us that although they were apprehensive at first, they had no problems with blind children in the regular classroom.

Dr. Lars Guldager, new director of the Oak Hill School for the Blind—which deals mainly with severely multiply handicapped

blind children spelled out the changing format of services at the school. The effect is to ensure public school teachers and parents of blind pupils that blind children can be mainstreamed in public schools successfully, happily, and beneficially. In the discussion period that followed, Federationists urged the experts to start the teaching of Braille as early as possible, although large-print texts may sometimes be useful. Too often, children lose the limited vision they start with, yet they have not been taught Braille skills because of that vision.

In the morning business session, president Howard May awarded a charter to our newest chapter, located in the Stamford area, which organized in March. Its president is Mrs. Mary Main; George Eltgrowth is vice-president; Mrs. Carol Lowe, secretary; and Mrs. Shirley Trueheart, treasurer. Reports from other chapters were heard. President May reported on the problem that fishing licenses for blind persons and mentally retarded persons were stamped with the word "blind" or "MRP." The Department of Economic Protection has agreed to stop this practice. The state library for the blind and physically handicapped, under the state library, is being reorganized, which will hopefully provide more consistent and effective service to consumers. The Federation has been carrying on struggles in these two areas for some time. President May also reported that the refusal of Hartford Hospital to permit him to visit patients accompanied by his guide dog is being contested. The matter is in the hands of the Connecticut Human Rights Commission, and a complaint has been filed under the provisions of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Several resolutions were adopted, including one on the Hartford Hospital situation; one deploring and denouncing the adoption

by the Connecticut Legislature of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) regulations concerning removal of barriers from buildings, particularly those concerning the blind; and several resolutions concerning the need for transportation and inclusion of blind consumers in planning for transportation for the handicapped.

Mrs. Mary Main was elected and Mrs. Betty Pacelli re-elected to two-year terms as members of the state executive committee. Jim Ahearn was elected delegate to the 1978 NFB Convention. In addition to Rami Rabby, who represented the National Office, Jon May and Peggy Pinder, president of the

NFB Student Division, were prominently present. Jonathan May and Joyce Lebowitz served as chairmen of the convention, with Jon working out the program and publicity and Joyce handling the logistical arrangements.

At this moment of writing, a postscript must be added. Jonathan May, first vice-president of the NFB of Connecticut, has resigned to take a position in North Carolina. We are pleased for Jon, but we will miss him in Connecticut. President May has appointed Peggy Pinder to the post of first vice-president; and Mary Brunoli was appointed state secretary. □

RECIPES OF THE MONTH

by MAXINE N. BROWN

Note: Here are two recipes for no-bake cookies. The author assures us they are almost certain to come out perfectly. She adds that the second recipe is especially good if you drizzle one cup of melted butterscotch chips over the cookies.

CHOCOLATE GRAHAM COOKIES

Ingredients

½ cup butter or margarine	1½ cups finely crushed honey-graham
¾ cup sugar	crackers
2 beaten eggs	2 cups tiny marshmallows
1 teaspoon vanilla	½ cup (3 ounces) chocolate chips

Melt the butter over low heat. Remove from heat and blend in sugar, then eggs. Return to low heat. Cook and stir until bubbly—about 3 minutes after the boiling stage. Stir in the crushed crackers, marshmallows, and vanilla while still hot. Pour this mixture into a 9 x 9 x 2 inch pan. Melt the chocolate chips over low heat and drizzle the chocolate over the pan. Cut after it cools, and store in refrigerator.

OATMEAL CHOCOLATE COOKIES

Ingredients

1 stick of butter or margarine	½ cup milk
2 cups sugar	½ cup peanut butter
5 level tablespoons	3½ cups quick-cooking oatmeal
unsweetened cocoa	(Quakers works best)
½ cup finely chopped nuts (optional)	

Into a saucepan put the margarine, sugar, cocoa, and milk. Boil and stir, cooking for three minutes after the boiling stage. Remove from heat and add the peanut butter, oatmeal, and finely chopped nuts (if desired). Stir vigorously until stiff, and while it is still hot, drop by spoonfuls onto waxed paper. □

MONITOR MINIATURES □□□□□□□□

□ After the NAC demonstration in Phoenix last November, we received a copy of a memo distributed on the stationery of the Arizona Department of Economic Security. It was from Frank Kells to the staff of the Section of Blind Services and Arizona Industries for the Blind, and it dealt with the expected picketing of the NAC meetings. The most interesting part of the memo was titled "Employee Leave," and it was in two

sections. It read:

"(1) Any SBS/AIB staff member or employee, with his/her Supervisor's prior approval, may attend the official NAC meetings (November 14, 1:30-4:30, and November 15, 9:00-12:30) on regular duty time. They are at Ramada Inn East, 3801 East Van Buren.

"(2) Any staff member or employee wishing to participate in any demonstration/picketing/counter-picketing activity may do

so with Supervisor approval of time off. HOWEVER, such time MUST be charged to Annual Leave, or Compensatory Time if available."

□ The following comes to us from Alan "Sandy" Sanderson of the National Federation of the Blind of Alaska:

"After a two-year struggle to establish a school for the adult blind in the State of Alaska, we have finally accomplished that goal. On December 12, 1977, the school opened its doors and admitted its first blind student, a gentleman by the name of Darrel Nather, of Anchorage.

"The board of directors for the school was formed, and the chairman of the board of the NFB of Alaska is also chairman of the board for the school. We feel that this is a step in the right direction—for having good representation of the blind. It was the unanimous decision of the board that the school be named the Louise Rude Sensory Impairment Center of Alaska. This is in honor of the hard and diligent work of this dedicated Federationist who is the president of the NFB of Alaska."

□ The following reports and announcement come from Glenn Crosby, president of the NFB of Texas:

"For a fun-filled, action-packed weekend of fun and work, come one, come all to the 1978 convention of the NFB of Texas, March 17 through 19, at the Blue Bonnet Hotel in San Antonio. Room rates are \$13.95 singles, \$15.95 doubles, and \$17.95 for quads. For reservations, write to the Blue Bonnet Hotel, 426 North Saint Mary Street, San Antonio, Texas 78292. Among other exciting events, we will draw the winner of the raffle of a Lowrey Magic 88 electric organ, valued at over \$3,000 and delivered free of charge. Tickets for the raffle are one dollar and can be bought from Glenn Crosby, 1010 Ashland Street, Houston, Texas 77008. Make your checks or money orders payable to the NFB of Texas. Our convention is truly an experience you won't want to miss. Mark your calendar now and come on down so we can say 'howdy' to you.

"The NFB of Texas welcomes the Travis County Chapter into the Federation family. Its president, Mr. Marshall Levett, a most able leader, along with his enthusiastic members, is making energetic plans of action for moving our cause forward.

"A Saturday evening graced with unseasonably pleasant weather for the Texas Gulf Coast found a group of time-tried Federationists gathered together in the heart of Houston on September 17 for the purpose of breaking bread together, reminiscing with one another, and honoring the charter members of the Houston Council Chapter, National Federation of the Blind. The occasion was a celebration dinner to mark the 20th birthday of this local chapter.

"Master of ceremonies and first vice-president of the chapter Louie Vinson, aided by president Peggie Melton, recounted some of the struggles and victories of this chapter over the past 20 years. It was this local chapter that was instrumental in helping to reorganize the NFB of Texas in 1967, which now has grown to include eight other local chapters and is still growing. The evening was topped off by a refreshing and colorful address by Dr. William Strong, chairman of the Educational Administration Department of Texas Southern University.

"Four charter members of the chapter were present: Mrs. Gladys Tenpenny, Mrs. Margie Sims, and Idabell and Cecil Sparks. A moment of silence was observed in honor of those Federationists no longer living. Among that number is the chapter's first president, Mr. Ray Holder. Federationists went home carrying with them a feeling of renewed dedication, of gratitude for those who have gone before us, and prepared to man the barricades whenever and wherever we must."

□ Dr. Dennis R. Wyant, special assistant to the Administrator of Veterans Affairs, and immediate past national president of the Blind Veterans Association (BVA), went to Germany last fall to participate in the conference of the West German War-Blinded Association in Mainz, West Germany. At the completion of the conference, he attended

the 4th International Congress of the War-Blinded at Bad Berleburg, one of the 11 health spas and homes for the war-blinded in Germany. Ten countries came together at the Congress to discuss the problems of blinded veterans. West Germany has about the same number of blinded veterans as the United States—approximately 4,500. Small countries, such as Luxembourg, have about 6 war-blinded veterans, whereas larger countries such as France and Great Britain have many more.

All the countries were concerned with the pension system for their war-blinded. The participants were particularly interested in America's concept of the total integration of blinded veterans into society. Other issues ranged from the service delivery system for blinded veterans to the newest prosthetic and sensory aids developed by each country.

□ The following is from Myrna Fisher of the NFB of Spokane, Washington:

"The new NFB film, 'We Know Who We Are,' has received wide exposure in the Spokane area due to the efforts of the Lilac Blind Foundation Service Center. The Center was accepted as an agency of United Way beginning January 1978. It was included in the tours for United Way's loaned executives and fundraisers. The 23 tours, which totaled approximately 500 people, saw dem-

onstrations of aids and appliances, heard discussions of training techniques, and saw the NFB film.

"'We Know Who We Are' provided a real educational tool," said Al Fisher, manager of the Center. "As word of the tour spread around town, we were inundated with requests for more showings, and it proved to be a very effective method of furthering our program in the community. The film was particularly appreciated because it dealt with real problems faced by blind trainees and served to vividly illustrate what we are trying to accomplish."

"The Lilac Blind Foundation Service Center had also sent letters to 200 community organizations advising that the film was available. Assistant manager Nancy Brenton and rehabilitation teacher Alco Canfield also participated in conducting discussions at meetings of many community organizations.

"A large part of the success of the program was due to the efforts of NFB members Jim and Sally Dotson, who got the Presbytery of the Inland Empire to donate a movie projector to the Lilac Blind Foundation. The two previous NFB films—'The Blind Guys' and 'The Blind: An Emerging Minority'—have also been widely used with community groups and the parents of blind children in the area." □

PRE-AUTHORIZED CHECK PLAN (*Instructions on back of the card*)

I hereby authorize the National Federation of the Blind to draw a check to its own order in the amount of \$_____ on the _____ day of each month payable to its own order. This authorization will remain in effect until revoked by me in writing and until such notice is actually received.

X

Bank signature of donor (both signatures if two are necessary)

Address

We understand that your bank has agreed to cooperate in our pre-authorized check plan on behalf of your depositor. Attached is your client's signed authorization to honor such checks drawn by us.

Customer's account and your bank transit numbers will be MICR-printed on checks per usual specifications before they are deposited. Our Indemnification Agreement is on the reverse side of the signed authorization.

AUTHORIZATION TO HONOR CHECKS DRAWN BY NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

Name of depositor as

shown on bank records

Name of bank and branch, if any, and

address of branch where account is maintained

Acct. No.

For my benefit and convenience, I hereby request and authorize you to pay and charge to my account checks drawn on my account by the National Federation of the Blind to its own order. This authorization will remain in effect until revoked by me in writing, and until you actually receive such notice I agree that you shall be fully protected in honoring any such check. In consideration of your compliance with such request and authorization, I agree that your treatment of each check, and your rights in respect to it shall be the same as if it were signed personally by me and that if any such check be dishonored, whether with or without cause, you shall be under no liability whatsoever. The National Federation of the Blind is instructed to forward this authorization to you.

X

Bank signature of customer (both signatures if two are necessary)

Date

NFB PRE-AUTHORIZED CHECK PLAN. This is a way for you to contribute a set amount to the NFB each month. The amount you pledge will be drawn from your account automatically. On the other side of this card, fill in the amount you want to give each month and the day of the month you want it to be drawn from your account. Sign the card in two places, where the X's are. The rest will be filled in by the NFB Treasurer. Enclose a voided check with the card, and mail it to Richard Edlund, Treasurer, National Federation of the Blind, Box 11185, Kansas City, Kansas 66111. Your bank will send you receipts for your contributions with your regular bank statements. You can increase (or decrease) your monthly payments by filling out a new PAC Plan card and mailing it to the Treasurer. Also, more PAC Plan cards are available from the Treasurer.

INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT

To bank named on the reverse side:

In consideration of your compliance with the request and authorization of the depositor named on the reverse side, the NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND will refund to you any amount erroneously paid by you to The National Federation of the Blind on any such check if claim for the amount of such erroneous payment is made by you within twelve months from the date of the check on which such erroneous payment was made.

Authorized in a resolution adopted by the Board Members
of the National Federation of the Blind on November 28, 1974

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF THE BLIND

BY: _____
Treasurer

THE BRAILLE MONITOR
218 RANDOLPH HOTEL BLDG.
DES MOINES, IOWA 50309

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